



June 4, 1990

Dear Mr. Furfey:

Enclosed, as a reminder, is a copy of
ASPIRA's request for a contribution for the
1990-1991 program year.

Thank you for your attention to this
matter.

Sincerely,


Hilda Rosario
Executive Director

ASPIRA, INC. OF NEW JERSEY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE • 390 BROAD STREET • NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07104 • (201) 484-7554

February 13, 1990

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Joseph Furfey
Vice President
First Jersey National Bank
One Exchange Place
Jersey City, NJ 07302

Dear Mr. Furfey:

On behalf of the ASPIRA family of New Jersey, I ask that Edwards and Kelsey, Inc. considers renewing its donation of \$2,000 in support of our programs during calendar year 1990. What follows is a Progress Report which summarizes our work and accomplishments during school year 1988-89, as well as our expectations for the new fiscal year.

Special Accomplishments, 1988-89

1. Caseload increases by 10%

During school year 1988-89 ASPIRA met its goal of increasing its caseload by 10%. Moreover, a total of 2,671 students received our assistance. The details are as follows:

Carryover caseload from 1987-88	540
New students recruited 1988-89	955
Total active, 1988-89	1,595
Other students served	1,166
Total served.....	2,761

2. Implementation of Student Data Base System

Many of the data we need to advocate for the services we provide are not gathered by government agencies. We needed a means to design and implement a Student Data Base System that will allow us to prepare composite student profiles with detailed information about the characteristics of the students we serve. This is essential for improved planning strategies.

(MORE)

With the assistance of a computer consultant and through in-service staff development activities, this key aspect of our management information system is now fully operational. We now have the capability to collect data on variables such as family income. The data we gathered during 1988-89 indicate that 32% of our caseload receives public assistance payments, and an additional 21% receives annual family incomes under \$11,000. Consequently, we can say that at least 53% of our students live under poverty level. The figure may be higher because our data base does not yet include number of persons in the household, which are known to be high among our students. During school year 1989-90 we will be able to produce valid and reliable in-house data to strengthen our advocacy on behalf of our youth.

3. Expansion in Central and Southern Jersey

Our operations in Mercer and Camden counties are now under the supervision of a Programs Director, a position created to provide on-site leadership and coordination to staff in our Centers in South Jersey. Moreover, the Camden center was fully staffed and now provides full time services to three schools (as opposed to one school served the previous year.)

The Camden center implemented an initiative to mobilize parents and involve them in the work which ASPIRA conducts with their children. The initiative is being evaluated for possible replication in other centers.

Our Regular Programs

In addition to what was summarized above, ASPIRA continued its tried and tested Leadership Development, Early Intervention/Dropout Prevention, Career and Academic Counseling, and Cultural Awareness activities to serve the education needs of Puerto Rican/Hispanic youth. Highlights from our regular programs follow.

Leadership Development

There are 13 ASPIRA Clubs organized in an equal number of schools in the five counties now served by ASPIRA (Camden, Essex, Hudson, Mercer and Passaic.) A total of 281 Club meetings were held during the school year, at an average of 22 meetings per Club. Within the Clubs, students learn parliamentary procedures and develop problem solving and decision making skills.

(MORE)

A Leadership Retreat was held November 4th-6th, 1988 for the Clubs' elected officers. A statewide Youth Conference was held May 9th, 1989, for students to address problems confronted in their schools and communities. On June 16th, 1989 a formal Awards Night Ceremony was held to recognize special merits.

Counseling

Our counseling staff provided students a total of 1,375 hours of counseling services in 2,685 sessions, at an average of 51 minutes per session. A breakdown of these services reveals the following to be major counseling services categories: in-take, career, academic, postsecondary admissions, financial aid, personal, home, and referral.

Placement

For the 1989-90 academic year, ASPIRA placed 373 students in a variety of programs, as follows:

Program	Students
Postsecondary education	201
Graduate school	2
Medical school	9
Summer pre-medical school	3
Pre-college for junior high school students	87
High school equivalency	44
Internship:	
AT&T	25
Public Policy Leadership, NJ	8
Public Policy Leadership, D.C.	2
TOTAL	373

Career Awareness

To develop career awareness ASPIRA conducts a variety of activities during the year. A total of 30 field trips was provided, exposing students to colleges, universities and corporate environments. A Legal Careers Conference was held on November 30, 1988 at the Richard Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton. A Health Careers Conference was held February 17, 1989 at William Paterson College. The traditional Careers Day Conference was held December 20, 1988 at Jersey City State College.

(MORE)

Cultural Awareness

The major activities under this category during school year 1988-89 were the celebration of Three Kings Day (held on January 3, 1988), a day-long Cultural Awareness Conference held at Rutgers University, Camden Campus, (April 17, 1989) and the traditional participation of our students in the Puerto Rican Day Parade (July 23, 1989 for Essex and August 6, 1989 for Mercer and Camden.) At the Cultural Awareness Conference, three guest speakers addressed our students on topics pertaining to history, sociology and politics. Participant Evaluation Forms revealed a high degree of student satisfaction with this activity.

Early Intervention

Starting in 1981-82, ASPIRA moved into the junior high school level to bring younger students into our programs. During the 1988-89 school year, 277 junior high school students integrated 17% of our active caseload. Of 92 eight graders served, 87 (or 95%) were placed into pre-college programs.

Dropout Prevention

Although all our programs are means to increase school retention, ASPIRA also directly assists students who have abandoned their studies. Eighty such students (or 5% of our caseload) were helped to return to school or college during 1988-89, as follows: 39 to junior high school, 36 to high school, two were helped to obtain their GED, and three more to resume their college studies.

Staff Development

A variety of in-service staff development activities were conducted throughout the year to increase the knowledge and skills of our staff. An important component of these activities has been training in computer literacy for both program and administrative staff, to increase our operations' cost-effectiveness. Through this special effort we were able to implement our Student Data Base System, mentioned as a special accomplishment. We have also developed an in-house computerized mailing list, and more efficient accounting and cost-control systems.

(MORE)

Math and Science Initiative

ASPIRA has continued to work with elementary school students (3rd and 4th graders) and their parents to facilitate their mastery of these academic areas. In this endeavor, assistance has been obtained from the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

New Projects for 1990-91

1. Parents' Mobilization

Preliminary results of the pilot program initiated by our Camden Center indicate that it has been well received by parents. Plans are underway to replicate this type of work with parents in other ASPIRA centers based upon the Camden experience.

2. Computer Assisted Instruction

As a means to strengthen the academic tutorial services provided to our students, as well as to utilize more efficiently the computers we have been donated, we are taking steps to create a Computer Assisted Tutorial Center. This will not only improve our students' knowledge and skills in traditional academic subjects, but it will also provide computer literacy skills to interested students.

3. Alumni Association

A first step has been taken to create an ASPIRA Alumni Association. A junior at Rutgers University who has been interning with ASPIRA and who is an Alumnae herself, has convened a Development Team, integrated by ASPIRA Alumni, to organize an Association. It is expected that the Association will collaborate with ASPIRA in advocacy and fundraising activities. Further, Alumni have expressed interest in acting as mentors for students in our active caseload, and as resource persons who will emphasize the cultural awareness and community service components of our work.

(MORE)

Conclusion

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey continues to play a vital role in serving the educational needs of Puerto Rican/Hispanic youth of New Jersey. Our institutional strength goes hand in hand with our understanding of what is needed in our community and our striving to provide programs of excellence.

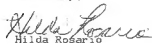
We are happy to see that Corporate America has at last discovered the Hispanic dropout problem and the tragedy it represents, not only for individual lives, but for the future economic well-being of the United States. *Business Week*, for instance, published at the end of 1989 a special advertising section asking whether American education is in a collision course with the future, utilizing the high rate of minority dropouts in the inner cities as one of the indicators which make the question relevant.

Before demographic trends pointed at the problem, we knew. In fact, ASPIRA was created in 1968 because our community leaders were aware of the problem when it was not even recognized as such by the mainstream.

Now our work is more important than ever, if only because the needs we address are finally acknowledged as a problem that must be reduced lest the country is forced to pay an unbearable price. Our experience of more than 20 years provides a wisdom that not many institutions can claim for themselves. In both our experience and wisdom, corporate support has been and continues to be key. A donation to ASPIRA is an investment in the economic well-being of the State.

I shall be delighted to provide any additional information deemed necessary by the First Jersey National Bank to consider our request, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Hilda Rosario
Executive Director